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GARGOYLES

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GARGOYLES

Adapted by Lawrence Henry from the TV series GARGOYLES

A GOLDEN BOOK • NEW YORK
Western Publishing Company, Inc., Racine, Wisconsin 53404

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A thousand years ago Viking warriors attacked the Scottish castle of Wyvern. As the Vikings slowly began to climb the castle walls, the Scottish soldiers tried to stop them.

Luckily, the Scottish Captain had a secret weapon—Gargoyles. They were creatures of stone who came alive at night. The Captain knew he could trust and depend on them.

At nightfall the Vikings' chief, Hakon, was almost over the wall when the leader of the Gargoyles, Goliath, burst free from his stone shell. "You are trespassing," roared Goliath as he swooped down and grabbed the evil Viking.

Hakon's sword slashed Goliath. Surprised by the pain, Goliath dropped the Viking. Hakon saved himself by grabbing a nearby rope. "Keep fighting, men," Hakon shouted. "The monsters can be wounded!"

But Goliath spread his mighty wings and thought no more about his injury. Gliding down among the enemy, he knocked many of them off the castle wall. Other Gargoyles fought with those who had reached the top. At last, the enemy was driven away.

That night the Scottish Captain invited Goliath to a victory celebration. When Goliath arrived with a female Gargoyle, Demona, the sight of them enraged Wyvern's ruler, Princess Katharine.

"Captain, we are very displeased," she said. "The monsters may do battle for us, but we do not allow *beasts* in our dining hall!"

Demona's eyes flashed. "We saved their lives! They should bow to us!" she said.

"They protect us while we sleep," Goliath reminded her. "The daylight shall bring us peace and heal our wounds."

The Captain apologized to Goliath and Demona. The princess's words angered him. He vowed to make the people of Wyvern sorry they had mistreated the Gargoyles.

The Captain sneaked out of the castle and made his way to the Viking camp to see Hakon.

As the sun rose, the Captain and Hakon plotted together. The Captain would help the Vikings conquer Castle Wyvern. But he would make sure the Gargoyles were safe by tricking them into leaving the castle before the attack.

That night the Captain returned to Wyvern and talked to Goliath. "The Vikings may be planning a surprise attack," the Captain said slyly. "You and the Gargoyles must go and find them before they return."

At that moment Goliath was distracted by loud voices. Three young Gargoyles and their dog had gotten into mischief with some humans camped outside the castle.

"Go to the caves beneath the castle," Goliath told them. "I will deal with you later."

Goliath thought it too dangerous for the Gargoyles to leave Wyvern unprotected. So he chose his oldest and wisest warrior and they glided off in search of the Vikings.

Hours passed. Finally they spotted the enemy, but it was a decoy—only a few Vikings were there. "It's a trick!" cried Goliath. "We must go back."

The two Gargoyles were far from Wyvern. They had to return quickly. But before they reached the castle gates, the sun rose and they were turned to stone!

That morning the Viking warriors attacked Wyvern. The Captain opened the huge iron gate for them. The Scottish soldiers were outnumbered and the Captain watched as the people of Wyvern were captured. He had his revenge!

Then Hakon lifted his weapon in victory and cried, "I command you to smash the Gargoyles to pieces!"

After the sun set, Goliath and his companion returned to Wyvern to find all the Gargoyles destroyed, except those he had sent to the caves. Goliath howled with sadness.

But he remembered his vow to protect the humans. "We will save them and have our revenge!" Goliath cried.

The Gargoyles searched for the Vikings and their captives. They found them camped near a mountain cave.

Hearing the Gargoyles approach, Hakon and the Captain dragged Princess Katharine to a cliff.

Seeing the enraged Goliath alive, Hakon feared for his life. He turned on the Captain and blamed *him* for destroying the Gargoyles. Angry at such dishonesty, the Captain flung himself at Hakon. As they struggled, the princess toppled over the cliff, but Goliath reached down to catch her just in time. The Captain and Hakon continued to wrestle and soon fell over the edge.

The Magus, the court sorcerer, had heard the cries of the princess and thought she had been killed during the attack. Not knowing that Goliath had saved her, the Magus blamed the Gargoyles for her awful fate.

In anger, the Magus grabbed his book of spells and found a curse that would punish the Gargoyles.

"Sleep, all of you!" he cried. "Sleep by night and day until the castle rises above the clouds!"

Instantly the innocent Gargoyles were turned to stone.

When Goliath climbed back up the cliff with the princess, he saw the Gargoyles of stone. "What evil magic is this?" he asked the Magus.

Seeing Katharine, the Magus cried, "Princess! I thought you were dead! I blamed them and placed a curse on them!"

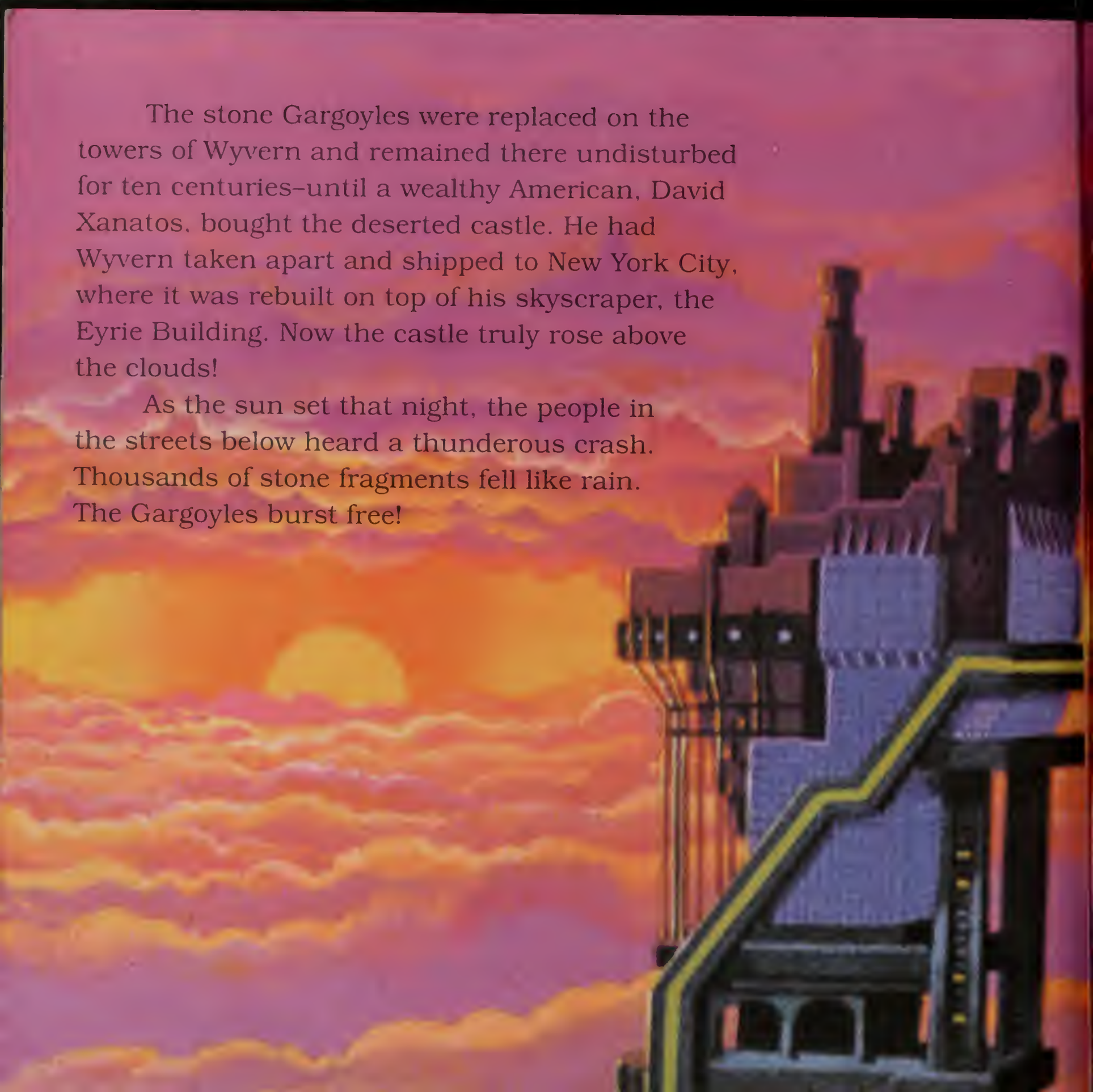
"What is the curse?" asked the mighty Goliath.

"They shall sleep," answered the Magus, "until the castle rises above the clouds."

"Magician," cried Goliath, "have pity and curse me, too, so I may join them." And so it was done.

The stone Gargoyles were replaced on the towers of Wyvern and remained there undisturbed for ten centuries–until a wealthy American, David Xanatos, bought the deserted castle. He had Wyvern taken apart and shipped to New York City, where it was rebuilt on top of his skyscraper, the Eyrie Building. Now the castle truly rose above the clouds!

As the sun set that night, the people in the streets below heard a thunderous crash. Thousands of stone fragments fell like rain. The Gargoyles burst free!



The Gargoyles looked around in wonder. What magic had brought them here? For now, they knew only that they were alive and together as protectors of a strange new world.

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ISBN: 0-307-12917-9